

# **FIGHT ELITISM, STAND WITH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & YOUTH WORK AT GOLDSMITHS.**

## **Background**

- The management team of the Social, Therapeutic and Community Studies Department (STaCS), have launched an unprecedented attack on the part time staff of its highly successful BA Degree in Applied Social Science, Community Development and Youth Work (BAASSCD&YW) - the only remaining full time community and youth work degree in London 2016-17.
- Over the past two years the programme has recruited increased numbers of students and as a result, has generated a substantial increase in levels of income.
- Under the guise of a 'staff restructure' management are proposing to use these resources to replace a diverse group of up to 6 part-time staff with 2-3 full time staff who are either engaged in doctoral level research or who have completed a PhD, in order to meet departmental research priorities, in particular to improve grant capture and REF ratings.
- The BAASSCD&YW course, which has a student cohort of 81% BME students, is being singled out as these departmental research priorities are not being applied across the department.
- The students are outraged, as they are already challenging management for cutting their contact hours from over 200 hours to 120 hours per year.

## **BA programme strengths – values and ethos**

The Programme was thoroughly revised last year and has also undergone internal reviews and external National Youth Agency reviews this year - all have highlighted that academic rigour, equality and social justice and relevant professional practice are embedded in the programme and praised the existing diverse staff team, for example;

- *The...changes will strengthen what is already a well-regarded BA Programme...The continued commitment of the teaching staff will be vital in ensuring its future (BA Review Final Report, 2016)*
- *The programme team were praised for their academic, community engagement, current practice (NYA Validation Report 2016 section 7, p9)*

Both past and present students, also appreciate the diversity of the current staff team's academic expertise and interests along with their up to date and relevant professional practice.

- **NSS results 2016 show;** *overall satisfaction (95%); the course is intellectually stimulating (95%); staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching (95%); staff have made subject interesting (100%).*

## **Students comments about the programme:**

*'I have enjoyed the passion the lecturers have shown for their subjects and the support they have offered. Intellectually prompting lectures,...would recommend this course to everyone and anyone.*

*The group training has helped me to develop both personally and practically. Lecturers are passionate about teaching and about their own continued work within youth and community.*

*The CD&YW course has really challenged me to think differently and equipped me with skills to be an effective practitioner.*

*The tutors have been very supportive.'* (NSS, 2016)

## **Potential impact**

STaCS restructure proposal departs from Goldsmiths organisational change policy - management refuse to job match as staff are not on teaching and research contracts and they are not trying meaningfully to mitigate against redundancy. The restructure is being vigorously challenged by academic staff, students (via the college Student Union) and Goldsmiths University and College Union (GUCU) members - industrial action is likely.

- Management have presented a flawed rationale and no evidence that the recruitment of such staff on this professionally endorsed degree programme will improve the quality of teaching and learning, or enhance students' overall experience.
- The imposition of this untimely and totally unexpected management proposal will disrupt the progress of existing students and those students entering the revised programme
- It will have an overwhelming negative impact on BME staff and BME students who comprise 81%
- It disregards long-standing, highly regarded academic and professional skills and expertise of existing staff
- It represents a trend in HE which must be resisted.

## **Support Requested from Stakeholders**

We urge the BAASSCDYW wider community of stakeholders, who have supported the programme over several years, to write to the Warden, (Patrick Loughrey, email: [warden@gold.ac.uk](mailto:warden@gold.ac.uk)) expressing concern that part time staff are unnecessarily under the threat of redundancies and the potential impact on the programme, recommending that the existing staff (who have been repeatedly refused time to pursue research activities), should be supported to pursue research activities and should be valued and retained. We would also ask that you send a copy and messages of support to [gucu-admin@gold.ac.uk](mailto:gucu-admin@gold.ac.uk).

## **Keep up to date with news and further actions:**

<https://goldsmiths.org> @Goldsmithsucu #fightelitism #standwithcdyw

